Reviewed and updated at the meeting of the Scientific Council of Baku Eurasian University on 30.06.2025

Gender Equality Policy

1 Purpose and policy statement

Baku Eurasian University (BAAU) is committed to equal opportunities, dignity and fair treatment in education, employment, research and university governance. This policy establishes measures to prevent gender discrimination, remove barriers to participation and advance the representation of women where they are underrepresented. It also requires planned actions to recruit students, academic staff and administrative staff from other underrepresented groups.

BAAU integrates gender equality into its institutional planning. Decisions are based on transparent, relevant criteria. Discrimination, sexual harassment, exploitation, gender-based violence and retaliation are prohibited.

2 Scope and principles

This policy applies to applicants, students, academic and administrative staff, university leaders and persons acting on behalf of BAAU. It covers admissions, recruitment, employment conditions, promotion, teaching, assessment, research, scholarships, mobility, campus activities and access to support services.

No person is disadvantaged on the grounds of sex, gender, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, maternity, marital status or caring responsibilities. BAAU also addresses intersecting barriers associated with disability, socioeconomic disadvantage, ethnicity, nationality, religion, age or displacement. Targeted support addresses documented barriers while preserving transparent eligibility and selection criteria.

3 Identifying underrepresentation

Underrepresentation means that a group has a disproportionately low presence in a relevant programme, staff category or decision-making level, assessed against an appropriate applicant pool or other documented benchmark. BAAU reviews available data annually and identify the groups and areas requiring targeted action.

Priority groups may include women in programmes or leadership roles where their participation is low, persons with disabilities, applicants from low-income households, rural or remote communities, and displaced or minority groups where evidence identifies barriers. These categories are not an assertion that every group is underrepresented throughout BAAU.

4 Planned recruitment of underrepresented groups

BAAU implements a documented annual recruitment action plan covering student admissions and the recruitment of academic and administrative staff. The plan identifies priority groups, barriers, actions, responsible units, resources, delivery dates and measurable objectives. The Rector approves the plan before the relevant recruitment cycle; progress is reviewed each semester.

4.1 Student outreach and application support

The unit responsible for student recruitment, working with faculties and student support services, organises at least one targeted outreach activities each academic year with schools, community organisations or groups serving identified underrepresented communities. Activities explain entry requirements, available programmes, application steps, financial support and accessibility arrangements. Attendance and follow-up enquiries are recorded in aggregate.

Outreach encourages women to consider programmes in which they are underrepresented. Female academics, graduates and professionals are invited as role models. Guidance distinguishes programmes offered by BAAU from broader career information. Application assistance and accessible information are available to prospective students who face practical barriers.

Student admission follows applicable admission requirements and the relevant admission route. Targeted outreach and support improve access to the application process without bypassing national entrance requirements or published academic criteria.

4.2 Academic and administrative staff recruitment

The unit responsible for human resources reviews every vacancy announcement for unnecessary barriers and gender-biased wording. Advertisements state BAAU's commitment to equal opportunities, invite applications from underrepresented groups and explain how applicants may request reasonable adjustments.

Each externally advertised academic or administrative vacancy is circulated through at least one additional channel likely to reach an identified underrepresented group, alongside the standard recruitment channels. Human resources unit retains evidence of circulation and assess whether it broadens the applicant pool.

Selection panels use published essential criteria, consistent interview questions and documented scoring. Panel members receive guidance on bias and inclusive selection before participating. Career breaks related to maternity or caring responsibilities are assessed fairly. Accessible interview arrangements and reasonable adjustments are provided according to individual needs.

4.3 Financial support and partnerships

BAAU publishes the eligibility criteria and application procedures for available scholarships, fee support and accommodation assistance. The annual plan identifies the resources allocated to reducing financial barriers and develop additional support where feasible. Mentoring and application guidance shall accompany financial support where needed.

Relevant units seek cooperation with schools, community organisations, disability organisations, women's professional networks and other partners to reach prospective students and employees. Each planned partnership activity has a named university lead and a recorded recruitment purpose.

5 Equal participation and progression

5.1 Learning and academic participation

Faculties ensure that teaching, assessment and academic guidance are free from gender bias. Course materials and classroom practices challenge stereotypes and support respectful participation. Students have equitable access to research opportunities, internships, career guidance, extracurricular activities and international mobility, using published selection criteria.

5.2 Mentoring and career development

BAAU develops mentoring opportunities for female students and staff, particularly in fields or career stages where women are underrepresented. The responsible units announce eligibility and participation procedures, match participants with suitable mentors, and review participation and feedback annually. Career activities shall include role models, skills development and professional networking.

5.3 Employment and leadership

Recruitment, workload allocation, training, promotion and appointment to leadership roles use transparent criteria. BAAU upholds equal pay for equal work or work of equal value and periodically review available pay and progression data to identify unexplained disparities. Human resources unit proposes corrective actions where unequal treatment is identified.

University leaders encourage qualified women to apply for leadership and committee roles where representation is low. Leadership development, mentoring and fair access to professional training form part of the annual action plan. Appointments remain based on relevant qualifications and transparent assessment.

5.4 Pregnancy parenting and caring responsibilities

Pregnancy, maternity or caring responsibilities are not used to deny admission, employment, progression or access to university opportunities. Relevant units explain available leave and return arrangements and consider reasonable academic or workplace flexibility. Support is determined through an individual assessment and documented procedures.

6 Prevention reporting and response

BAAU provides regular awareness activities on gender equality, respectful conduct, harassment prevention and available reporting routes. All new students and employees receive information about this policy and how to seek support.

The Rector shall designate a trained contact person and an alternative reporting contact before this policy takes effect. Their contact details are published. Reports may be made in writing, in person or through an accessible university reporting channel. A person may bypass a manager or other official implicated in a complaint.

Complaints are acknowledged within five working days and assessed promptly for immediate support or protective measures. An impartial person or panel without conflicts of interest investigates, hear the relevant parties and communicate a reasoned outcome. Where a case cannot be concluded within 30 working days, the parties receive an explanation and a revised timetable.

Confidentiality is maintained on a need-to-know basis. Retaliation against complainants, witnesses or persons seeking support is prohibited. Confirmed breaches lead to proportionate action under university procedures. A review may be requested within ten working days of the outcome and is handled by a person or body not involved in the original decision. These procedures do not prevent access to external reporting or remedies.

7 Responsibilities and implementation

The Rector oversees implementation, approves the annual action plan and allocate responsibilities and resources. The Scientific Council considers annual findings and proposed policy changes. Within 30 days of approval, the Rector shall designate a policy coordinator and confirm the units responsible for each action; these functions may be assigned to existing units.

Human resources unit leads employee recruitment, selection guidance, pay and progression reviews. The unit responsible for student recruitment leads outreach and application support. Faculties implement inclusive teaching and mentoring. Student support and career services coordinate relevant assistance. The International Relations Office applies equal opportunity principles to mobility selection.

The policy coordinator consolidates the annual action plan, collects progress updates and maintains implementation records. Unit heads ensure that staff understand their responsibilities and report barriers requiring institutional action.

8 Monitoring evidence and annual reporting

Within the first six months after adoption, the responsible units shall establish a baseline using available data. The annual plan then sets justified numerical objectives for outreach, applicant participation and progression in identified areas. Objectives are informed by the baseline and do not operate as automatic admissions or appointment quotas.

The annual monitoring report covers:

- Targeted outreach activities, participating organisations, aggregate attendance and application enquiries.
- Student applications, offers and enrolments, and staff applications, shortlisting and appointments, disaggregated where appropriate and feasible.
- Participation in mentoring, financial support, professional development, leadership and mobility opportunities.
- Retention and progression patterns, reported barriers, and the completion of agreed corrective actions.
- Aggregate complaint information and response times, interpreted carefully; a low number of complaints is not by itself treated as proof that discrimination is absent.

Personal data are collected only for a defined purpose, with appropriate notice and safeguards. Sensitive demographic disclosure is voluntary. Access is restricted, and published reports use aggregated data and suppress small groups where identification is possible. Demographic information is not used to disadvantage individual applicants.

The university retains dated action plans, outreach materials, vacancy notices, selection criteria, training records, anonymised recruitment statistics and review decisions as evidence of implementation. A public annual summary describes actions completed, progress against objectives and the next steps. Incomplete actions have a revised deadline and a responsible owner.

9 Review and publication

This policy is reviewed every three years, or earlier where monitoring findings, institutional changes or applicable requirements make revision necessary. Annual action plans are updated each year. Students and staff, including representatives of underrepresented groups, are invited to contribute to the review. Approved versions are published on the university website and communicated to the university community.